

Draft EA Request Order Form

To obtain a copy of the Draft EA, fill out this form and mail to:

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
PN Regional Office
Attn: Vicki Kellerman (PN-3906)
1150 N Curtis Road, Suite 100
Boise, Idaho 83706-1234

☐ Please send me a printed copy of the Draft EA document

OR

☐ Please send me a digital copy of the Draft EA document (on CD-ROM, in PDF format)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____

Zip _____

Public Workshop – An Opportunity for You to Comment on the Draft EA

Reclamation encourages you to comment on the contents of the Draft EA, particularly the alternatives presented. Based on public and agency input received on the Draft EA and its alternatives, Reclamation will refine the alternatives, identify a Preferred Alternative, and prepare the Final EA. To encourage public participation in the review of the Draft EA, Reclamation is holding three public workshops. The workshop format will include a brief presentation by Reclamation, followed by an informal workshop setting to encourage one-on-one dialog. Written comments will also be accepted at the workshops.

The location, date, and time of the public workshops are listed below:

May 11, 2006	May 17, 2006	May 18, 2006
Fort Hall Business Center	Best Western Cottontree Inn	Super 8 Teton West
Fort Hall, ID	450 West 4th South	133 State Hwy 33
5 pm to 7 pm	Rexburg, ID	Driggs, ID
	7 pm to 9 pm	7 pm to 9 pm

These locations were selected in part because of the facilities' accessibility to people with disabilities, as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Interested persons needing special assistance in this regard should contact Connie Wensman, Regional Office Accessibility Coordinator at (208) 378-5317 at least one week before the scheduled meeting so that arrangements can be made. TTYTDD # 1-800-833-6388.

You don't have to attend the meetings to comment on the EA document. Reclamation also invites you to submit any comments you have by mail or e-mail. Send your comments to Vicki Kellerman, at the address below, or to the following e-mail address: vkellerman@pn.usbr.gov. **Comments must be received by June 6, 2006.** It is Reclamation's practice to print and respond to all comments in the final EA.



Vicki Kellerman PN-3906
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PN Regional Office
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RECLAMATION
Managing Water in the West

May 2006
PACIFIC NORTHWEST
REGION

Teton River Canyon

RMP Newsbrief #2

TETON RIVER CANYON
Resource Management Plan

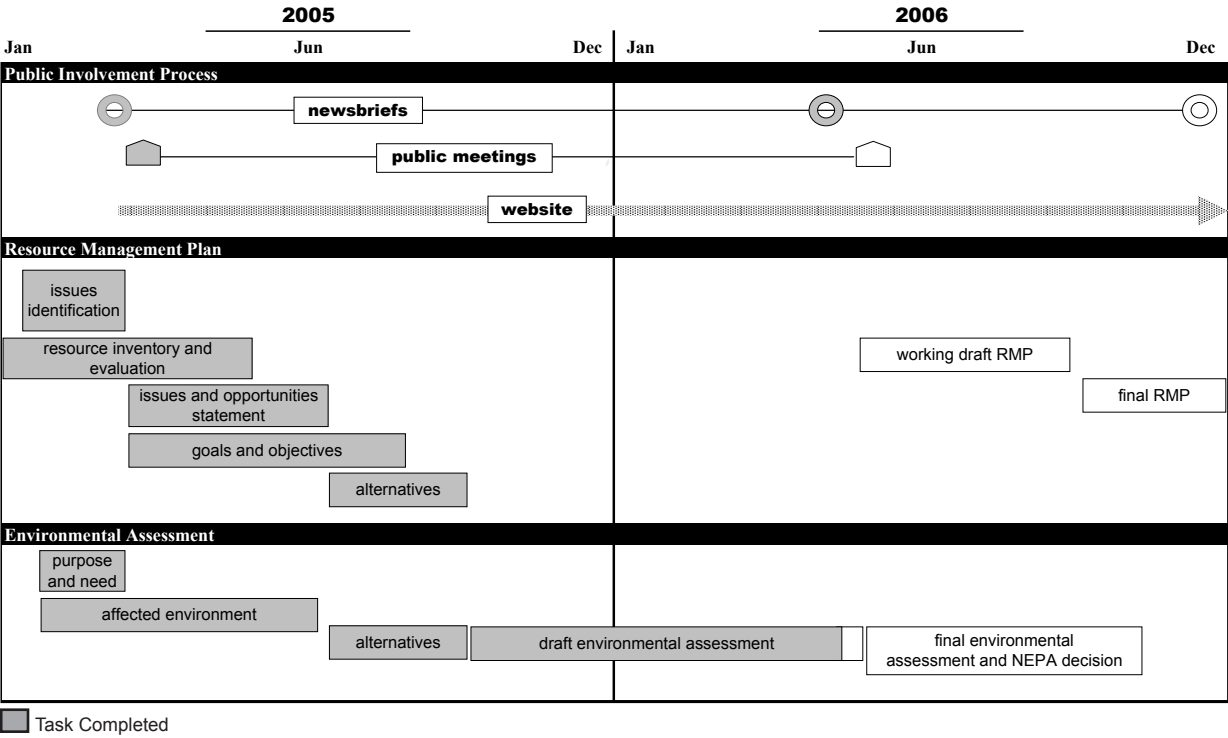
This is the second Newsbrief prepared as part of the Teton River Canyon Resource Management Plan (RMP) effort. This issue summarizes the work that has occurred since the last Newsbrief (March 2005), including the identification of the priority management issues, development of the RMP Goals and Objectives, and preparation of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) document. Also, this Newsbrief announces the next set of

public meetings/workshops to be held in May (see page 4 for more information on the public meetings).

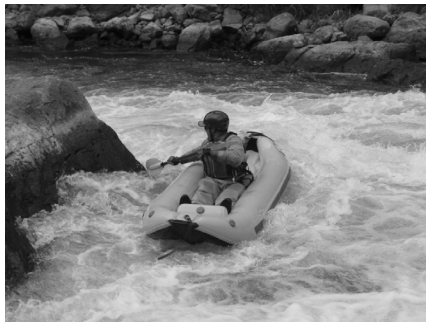
Background

Reclamation is preparing the Resource Management Plan to continue managing resources, facilities, and access on Reclamation lands and waters in the Teton River Canyon. The RMP will serve as a blueprint for the future use and management of Reclamation lands and resources in the RMP study area for the next 15 years.

The RMP will address all activities occurring on Reclamation lands in the Teton River Canyon, which includes about 5,840 acres along 22 miles of the Teton River. These lands are adjacent to and upstream of the Teton Dam site and along the canyon rim in Fremont, Teton, and Madison Counties in eastern Idaho. Lands in this study area are managed by Reclamation, as well as by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG).



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation



RMP Development – the Planning Effort So Far

In the initial stages of the planning process, Reclamation identified issues that the RMP will need to address. Management issues in the RMP study area are unique because of the failure of Teton Dam in 1976 and the resulting effects to resources in the river canyon. A preliminary list of these issues was presented at last year’s public meeting, and the list was revised and expanded based on information shared by the Tribes, the public, and agencies with management responsibility in the study area. The finalized list provides an important record of all of the concerns expressed by the Tribes, the public, other agencies, and the RMP Planning Team. Some of these issues include the following: controlling erosion in the study area; managing agricultural use on Reclamation lands; protecting the region’s natural resources; avoiding damage to cultural resources present in the area; and maintaining a primitive recreation experience in the river canyon, while considering targeted improvements to enhance the recreation experience.

Based on the list of priority management issues, Reclamation’s Planning Team developed an initial set of Goals and Objectives that are intended to chart the direction of the RMP in terms of management approach and potential areas for management action. The Goals and Objectives reflect the full range of

issues and opportunities that must be addressed in the RMP. They will be used as criteria by which the acceptability and success of alternative courses of action will be assessed. The RMP Goals and Objectives are organized as six major topic areas: Land Use Management; Natural Resources; Cultural Resources; Indian Trust Assets; Recreation, Access, & Visual Quality; and Interpretation, Education, & Information. For each of the more general Goals, Reclamation’s Planning Team developed a set of related Objectives, which provide more detail on how the Goals will be accomplished.

Draft EA and Alternatives

Two separate documents are being prepared as part of Reclamation’s RMP planning process – the RMP itself, and an Environmental

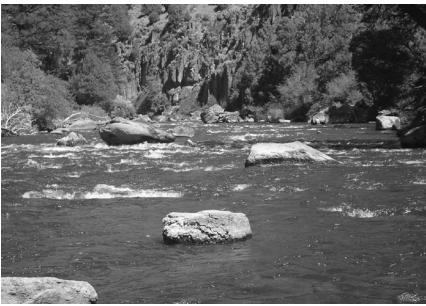
Assessment (EA). The Draft EA is being prepared in accordance with the Federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. The EA document’s main purpose is to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with a proposed Federal action – in this case, implementing the RMP. In accordance with NEPA, Reclamation has examined a reasonable range of alternatives to implement the RMP. The Planning Team has developed two draft “action” alternatives, as well as the “No Action” alternative (as required by NEPA). At this point, these are specifically intended as draft alternatives, meaning that we are soliciting your input to modify, add to or delete from, or otherwise change them, as necessary. At this stage of the planning process, Reclamation has not identified a Preferred Alternative.

Where to Find the Draft EA Document

Copies of the Draft EA document are being sent to several places where the public can review them. Locations were chosen for their convenience and public accessibility. If you would prefer to request a digital or paper copy of the Draft EA document be mailed directly to you, use the Request Order Form on page 4 of this Newsbrief. Copies of the Draft EA are available at the following locations:

Location #1 Teton County Library Alta Branch Library 15 Alta School Road Alta, Wyoming	Location #2 Madison Library District 73 North Center Street Rexburg, Idaho
Location #3 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation PN Regional Office 1150 N Curtis Road, Suite 100 Boise, Idaho	Location #4 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Snake River Area Office (East) 1359 Hansen Avenue Burley, Idaho

The Draft EA document will also be available electronically (in PDF format) and posted on Reclamation’s website by May 8, 2006. Please access the website at www.usbr.gov/pn and follow links to the Teton River Canyon RMP to view the document electronically.



Each of the three alternatives is summarized below. Detailed information on all of the alternatives, as well as a comparison of the three, is presented in the Draft EA.

Alternative A: No Action – Continuation of Existing Management Practices. If implemented, this alternative would mean that Reclamation would continue to manage their lands according to existing agreements and under applicable laws and regulations. “No Action” does not mean status quo – instead, management of the area would be on an as-needed basis, without the benefit of an overall management plan. Reclamation would continue to renew existing agricultural leases on Reclamation lands with consideration for consistency with Project purposes, environmental compliance, and public concerns. No grazing leases or new agricultural leases would be issued.

Alternative B. This “Action” Alternative would improve management of the canyon and fulfill Reclamation’s stewardship responsibilities within the existing Project purposes. To reflect the Goals & Objectives developed for the RMP, management actions under Alternative B would be taken to limit the degradation of natural and cultural resource values while allowing for future unforeseen opportunities. To reflect the Goals & Objectives developed for the

RMP, management actions under Alternative B would be taken to:

- Enhance native vegetation and reduce noxious weeds.
- Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.
- Reduce erosion and protect water quality.
- Renew agricultural leases with terms consistent with RMP Goals & Objectives.
- Improve some recreation facilities at existing use areas.
- Provide public access while maintaining a semi-primitive experience.
- Protect cultural resources, Indian sacred sites, and Indian trust assets.
- Maintain the existing visual quality of the area.
- Provide information and interpretive messages to the public.

Alternative C. This Action Alternative is similar to Alternative B, with some notable exceptions: (1) Alternative C would evaluate the continuation, elimination, and/or alteration of agricultural leases in consideration of the RMP Goals and Objectives; and (2) Alternative C would provide a greater level of public access to the rim at Rocky Gulch and Brown Road, as well as potential walk-in summer access at Linderman Road.

Despite their differences, all three alternatives share some common features:

- Continue to operate and maintain Reclamation lands and facilities in accordance with the existing Project purposes and security requirements.

- Continue to adhere to existing and future Federal, State, and County laws and regulations.
- Before any major ground-disturbing activities, conduct the appropriate level of site-specific NEPA analysis, Tribal consultation, and public involvement for cultural resources and Traditional Cultural Properties.
- Cost share with a non-Federal managing partner for recreation-related development or improvements for fish and wildlife, and follow relevant public laws.
- Coordinate with law enforcement entities to enforce Federal laws and regulations on Reclamation land.
- Comply with current accessibility regulations and standards required at all new facilities and on retrofits of existing facilities.

The Draft EA document presents an analysis of the potential environmental impacts if any of the three alternatives were implemented. Potential impacts are evaluated for natural resources (e.g., water quality and wildlife), cultural resources, as well as social benefits (e.g., recreation and land use). Another major step in the future planning process will be to complete the RMP, which will carry forward the Preferred Alternative and identify specific management actions and an implementation strategy for the next 15 years.

